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best side of the religious thought of our time, from which his views on this and other important questions here suggested may be gathered.

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THE LAW OF CIVILIZATION AND DECAY: An Essay on History.
By Brooks Adams. London: Macmillan & Co. Pp. xiv., 393.

Mr. Adams believes that he has discovered a law which governs the movement of human society in its "oscillations between barbarism and civilization." The basis of his theory is that physics is the ultimate philosophy of things and energy the highest of categories. "The law of force and energy is of universal application in nature, . . . animal life is one of the outlets through which solar energy is dissipated; . . . and as human societies are forms of animal life, these societies must differ among themselves in energy, in proportion as nature has endowed them more or less abundantly with energetic material." (Pp. viii., ix.) Thought is a "manifestation of human energy," and Fear and Greed are conspicuous "among the earlier and simpler phases of thought." Energy appears as Fear in "primitive and scattered communities," which are imaginative, religious, military, artistic; but as society becomes consolidated and centralized, energy expresses itself not as Fear but as Greed, and a new type of man becomes dominant, the economic man, who is unimaginative, sceptical, unwarlike, inartistic, a monster of voracity with the cleverness of a fiend and without a redeeming quality. Every race must come to this sooner or later, and ultimately "intensifying competition appears to generate two extreme economic types,—the usurer in his most formidable aspect and the peasant whose nervous system is best adapted to thrive on scanty nutriment." (P. x.) This condition may last for a time, until it is "ended by war, by exhaustion, or by both combined, as seems to have been the case with the Eastern Empire; or, as in the Western, disintegration may set in, the civilized population may perish, and a reversion may take place to a primitive form of organism." In this last case, the energy of the race is probably exhausted, and it must wait to be refreshed by the infusion of barbarian blood.

In support of his thesis, Mr. Adams offers us an outline of the history of European civilization, from Rome to modern England, in its economic aspect, following the centre of exchanges from

Rome to Constantinople, thence to Venice, and ultimately westward to London. The greater part of the book is devoted to the history of the Crusades (ending in Dandolo's capture of Constantinople and the ultimate suppression of the Templars), the rise of the Hanse Towns, and the history of England since the Reformation. Centralization and the supplanting of the martial by the economic type of man were the ruin of Rome. On this there followed decentralization and the reign of mystery, miracle, priestcraft, imagination, in the middle ages. The Crusades were the beginning of a centralizing movement, which showed itself successively in the economic power of Venice, the Hanseatic League, and the suppression of the Templars. This movement was continued and extended in the Reformation, which Mr. Adams regards as a commercial movement in favor of cheap religion. "As the tradesman replaced the enthusiast, a dogma was evolved by which mental anguish, which cost nothing, was substituted for the offering which was effective in proportion to its money value. This dogma was 'Justification by Faith,' the corner-stone of Protestantism." (P. 187.) So the savage and relentless march of Greed went on, ever quickening as it went; the church lands were seized, the convents were suppressed and despoiled, the yeomen were evicted, the adventurers and buccaneers were robbed of their gains, the Spanish Indies were swallowed more or less, and the hoards of the conquered Hindoo were drained. Finally appeared the bankers, notably the Rothschilds and other Jews of high finance, who forced the Western governments to adopt a fixed gold standard and, by thus preventing the currency from expanding to meet the requirements of trade, robbed and are robbing the commercial men, who robbed the landed proprietors, who robbed the convents and others, who were robbers of robbers back to the times when no one had much to be stolen. And now the financial aristocracy, the usurers, hold the rest of us in the hollow of their hands and are squeezing out of us all vitality and worth. Our architecture is the architecture of the ostentatious and parsimonious, sordid and niggling; "the present generation has drained to the lees the cup of realism; no poetry can bloom in the arid modern soil, the drama has died, and the patrons of art are no longer even conscious of shame at profaning the most sacred of ideals." (P. 383.) And so Mr. Adams takes leave of us with the warning that, "as consolidation apparently nears its climax, art seems to presage approaching disintegration."

It is a sad picture and a grave indictment. And in his Preface Mr. Adams tells us that "all theories contained in the book, whether religious or economic, are the effect and not the cause of the way in which the facts unfolded themselves. I have been passive." This is a statement which gives us pause; for is it not a commonplace that to think oneself "passive" in such an investigation as this is to be greatly self-deluded? And the commonplace is confirmed by Mr. Adams's philosophy of energy, which I have already indicated,—a philosophy which reduces every human phenomenon to its lowest terms, and, as a consequence, inevitably besets us with metaphors behind and before. If all is energy, it would require a much larger book than this to explain the sense in which we are to understand such terms as fear, greed, war, imagination, art, religion, society, trade, and countless others; but Mr. Adams delivers his philosophy *ex cathedra*, and leaves us to make what we can of the terms. However, leaving its philosophy out of account, the book is of very great interest and suggestiveness. It is evidently the result of long and patient labor, and on the whole it is well arranged and clearly expressed. But the real moral of it appears to me to be the ultimate folly and futility of every attempt to rob a community of its wealth, whether it be by the unfair competition of slave labor, by the power of religious fear, by conquest, by confiscation, or by undue limitation of the currency.

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THE CROWD: A Study of the Popular Mind. By Gustave Le Bon. English translation. London: T. Fisher Unwin. Pp. xxiv., 230.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PEOPLES. By Gustave Le Bon. English translation. London: T. Fisher Unwin. Pp. xx., 236.

These two books are studies of the "collective mind," firstly, as it manifests itself in the crowd, and, secondly, as it appears in the race. Both are brightly written, acute and interesting, and both are, we should imagine, introductory to a later book just advertised, "The Psychology of Socialism." For these studies point a moral with great vigor, and the moral is a warning against the advent of Socialism which the author regards as imminent, and which means for him the breaking down of civilization into barbarism.